
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



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Congress Receives Report on Progress in Iraq

This week, Congress received an update from General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker on the progress of Operation Iraqi Freedom. According to their testimony, since the troop surge was launched early last year, Iraq has seen a 90 percent reduction in ethno-sectarian violence. Civilian deaths, military deaths, and high profile attacks are also down dramatically. By any measure, this is a substantial achievement by our men and women in uniform. However, the armchair generals of the Democratic Party have refused to acknowledge this progress, instead accusing General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker of failure in Iraq and issuing calls for retreat. In response, Congressman Miller has cosponsored the Iraq Victory Resolution to express the sense of Congress that the war in Iraq is not lost, that progress on the ground is undeniable, and that these achievements are thanks to the skill and valor of American servicemembers.

Legislation Introduced to Prevent Outsourcing of Passports

Congressman Miller this week coauthored legislation to prevent American passports from being produced, even in part, outside the United States. By law, all new American passports must include a chip embedded in the cover which contains biometric data such as name, date of birth, place of birth, passport number, and a photo image of the traveler. However, it was recently revealed that the State Department has been using a subcontractor located in Thailand to inlay these chips, raising serious identity theft and national security concerns. In response, Congressman Miller joined his colleagues in introducing a measure that would require the Secretary of State to ensure all assembly of United States passports occurs only within the borders of the United States under the direct supervision of United States government employees. He believes this commonsense measure will go a long way toward improving national security while at the same time protecting Americans against the growing threat of identity theft.

House Works to Improve Water Quality at Southern California's Beaches

This week, the House debated a bill to reauthorize programs to monitor and test water quality at our nation's beaches. Specifically, the Beach Protection Act requires states and local governments to notify the public about potential water contamination within the first 24 hours after it is detected. In addition, a grant program will help identify and track the sources of water pollution at area beaches and encourage the use of rapid testing methods to ensure the public can be notified of contamination as soon as possible. Congressman Miller supports this bill because he believes it is important that the American people know our nation's coastal recreational waters are safe. This confidence is important not only to each citizen who swims or surfs, but also to California's tourism and recreation industries that rely on safe and swimmable coastal waters.

Congressman Miller Seeks Young Volunteers for Congressional Award

For the past several years, Congressman Miller has awarded youth in the 42nd District with the Congressional Award, the highest honor Congress bestows upon young people. Established in 1979, the Congressional Award provides a unique opportunity for young people between the ages of 14 and 23 to set and achieve personally challenging goals in the areas of community service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition or exploration. After achieving goals in each of these four categories, participants receive a Bronze, Silver, or Gold award based on the number of hours they have dedicated. Currently, Congressman Miller is seeking promising young people to participate in the program. If you or someone you know is interested in pursuing the Congressional Award, please call 1-888-80-AWARD or visit www.congressionalaward.org for more information.